1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

have no clear history of this kind of situation, but it seems possible that when there was no heir who could clearly claim ascendancy over the whole of a primal segment, the segment then split into two. Thus in our example, if there were sons in bevies 2 and 3 but not in bevy 1, the primal segment formed for the great wife in bevy 1 would in the next generation have split into two segments, one led by the heir in bevy 2 and the other by the heir in bevy 3. This hypothesis would be in accord with some of the disputes which I recorded between eldest sons by different mothers, each claiming to be the principal heir of their father.

Information drawn from village histories shows that there were sometimes similar disputes about which son of the great wife should be heir. The eldest son could be passed over if he were an obvious fool, and there was, therefore, the possibility of conflict between those who thought him a fool and those who did not. When the first wife married did not become the great wife, her eldest son was sometimes older than the great wife's son, and was sometimes his rival as heir. The contradiction between superordination by age and by status of mother among half-brothers brought up in the same vicinity led to conflict. A fourth mode of conflict was between a man's son and his lieutenant. Where the son was unsuccessful in commanding the loyalty of his father's dependants, effective leadership in his father's segment sometimes passed to the lieutenant.

We should, I think, be mistaken if we regarded these modes of dispute as causes. They were rather the idioms in which, in this particular system, rivalry was expressed between contiguous segments. Many dependants brought power and prestige for their lord, and the struggle for dependants went on within this remarkably flexible and yet orderly system. A man attracted dependants by remaining loyal to his lord; yet the more dependants he gained the more he differentiated himself from his lord. If a man was not the rightful heir in one segment, then he could try to gain the support of the lord of a higher segment and hope thereby to alter the distribution of power in the lower one. This consideration became particularly important after the arrival of Europeans, who exercised control over the whole State and at the same time were ignorant of and not bound by the values which maintained the old system.

We have mentioned the possibility of conflict between heirs arising from the method of ranking bevies. The same principle of ranking applied to segments and headquarters as well as to bevies of wives, and there were similar possibilities of conflict. In certain situations it appears as if that which was founded first was dominant,

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

and in other situations that which was founded last. The headquarters of the highest segment was in some sense capital of the nation, yet chieftainship had already passed from it and it was less important in other ways than the headquarters founded by the reigning chief. This apparent contradiction applied within every large segment. We have endeavoured to isolate these different contexts by our distinction between primal and residual segments, but as soon as we attempt to arrange villages or bevies of wives in a linear order without reference to the relationship of their associated segments to one another, the contradiction reappears.

A clear and accepted sequence of heirs would have been appropriate to a segmentary system in which segments continued to hold together in all circumstances. Ngoni segments did not do this, and the simple linear sequence of heirs was lacking. The successive formation of inferior segments implied increased structural separation between the first inferior segment to be formed and the headquarters, and hence less likelihood that the former would provide the main heir. As in lineage systems, the farther back the point of departure from the main line the greater the structural separation from it. But whereas in lineage systems it is the junior lines which are continually diverging from the main stem, in the Ngoni system the main heir was the first to break away from his father, who remained longer in close contact with his junior sons. Seniority within the newly formed undivided segment implied early differentiation within it, and hence early separation from its headquarters. Thus, the general principle of increasing separation with the passage of time, together with the particular principle of segment formation in order of seniority, combined to make a system of great flexibility despite essential regularity and uniformity. On the death of each segment head there was a shift of power within his segment and to some extent a formal recognition of the structural separation which had proceeded gradually during his lifetime. The headquarters founded by successive heads of segments persisted as the home of groups whose interests they symbolized. The history of the segments and of the nation itself was embodied in the relationships enduring between successive headquarters.

When a small segment was founded it was usually manned by people drawn from the rump of the immediately superior segment, that is, from those men and women in the superior segment who had not already been allocated to some inferior segment within it. However it is clear that this rule was often over-ridden. When the lord of a large segment formed a new inferior segment for a wife or son he was able to command the services of everyone within his

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Mashanga. Swann appears to have believed Mpezeni sincerely wished to stop raiding into the Protectorate although his people continued to do so.[88]

The cleavage within the tribe between Chief and people was attributed by Wiese to the large number of captives who had been incorporated.[89] We may well ask whether there had not always been considerable fluidity in the distribution of power among the different branches of the royal house and their supporters. After the death of Zwangendaba there was factional fighting, and at least once on the march north, about 1840, there was a purge in which the original members of the tribe, presumably Ndandwe by origin, killed off many of the more recently incorporated Tsonga who had been promoted at their expense.[90] These struggles show clearly that the formal arrangement of segments within the residential system did not preclude struggles for power within that system. The decline in power of Mpezeni and the rise of his heir must indeed be seen as part of the normal operation of the system rather than the result of manipulation or of unusual external conditions.

Wiese anticipated that there would be fighting on the death of Mpezeni.[91] Some idea of the way in which the fight would have gone in the new circumstances of European contact is given by Wiese's statement, in 1891, that Nzermane would not submit to Nsingu on Mpezeni's death and that he would be the best successor as far as the interests of Portugal were concerned.[92] Later, Deare remarked that the 'king had two other sons, younger than Tsinko, named Zamane and Madzimai, whom I never saw, but I learnt much about them and had fixed my eye on the former for the succession if anything happened'.[93] When British troops had already begun their advance on Ngoni, Manning, their commander, hoped that the tribe would split into factions, some of which would side with him.[94]

Fighting between rival claimants for the throne was likely even without external backing for one candidate. We have only to turn to Zululand for an analogous situation in which there was fighting

[88] Swann's report for 1896, *B.C.A.G.*, iv, 7 (15 April 1897), p. 1.
[89] Wiese, 'Geschichte', p. 187.
[90] See p. 19. Elmslie, *Wild Ngoni*, p. 24; Chibambo, *Ngoni*, p. 23; cf. Young, *History*, p. 112, who reverses the role played by witch-finders in this incident.
[91] As reported by Warton in June 1896, cited by Poole, *Native tribes*, p. 13.
[92] Wiese, 'Expedição', p. 493.
[93] Deare, 'Slave raiders', 11 May. In modern spelling, Nsingu, Nzermane, and Madzimawi.
[94] 1881, fo. 39.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

the latter. This alignment established, it was natural that Warton, though not himself a party to the Imperial struggle, should utilize it by arriving in the country from Tete, in Portuguese territory, rather than from Nyasaland, that he should pose as Wiese's brother, and, assuming that the Foreign Office was correctly informed, that he should fly a Portuguese flag. Genthe played a similar game with his Union Jack, but in a different area among the raided tribes. Even among the British, Mpezeni had three groups to deal with, North Charterland, B.S.A. Company, and the Nyasaland Administration. He was initially friendly and later hostile towards the first, unyielding to the second, and appealed for help to the third, although, or perhaps because, it was farthest away.

The effective cleavage within the Ngoni chiefdom was between the chief and his eldest son. We might have expected the major cleavage to have been between one son and another, particularly in view of North Charterland support for one son rather than another. We have some information concerning who Wiese and Deare thought were their friends, but some of these people appear to have taken a prominent part in the fighting. Mpezeni was certainly not entirely deserted by his own people, for he was able to send emissaries to Kotakota and to warn Wiese and Deare of plots against their lives.[121] The situation in which one section of the population supported the chief and the remainder supported his son may have been facilitated by the existence of what we have called rump segments in the residential system. For in this system the dependants of a segment head were not completely divided up among his heirs; there was a remainder who even after the death of the head constituted a rump segment and represented his interests as against those of his sons. Thus it may be that Mpezeni was supported by those who remained in his great wife's village, or perhaps in his father's great wife's village, as against those who had broken out from it. In the absence of satisfactory evidence, our hypothesis remains unverified. Such evidence as there is, is contradictory. Deare made friends, eventually, with the two senior lieutenants of segment 10, the segment of Mpezeni's great wife; this would support our thesis, as does Wiese's mention of the senior of these as one of his friends. Yet both of them, according to my informants, descendants of these men, were shot in the course of the campaign; this points against our thesis. In the list of friends and enemies which Wiese and his companions gave Brake, segments 4 and 10 each have members in both lists. Among those listed as friends are Ciboma msitini, regional governor in segment 4 and

[121] Wiese, 'Geschichte', p. 186; 187, fo. 137; Deare, 'Slave raiders', 11 May.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Mcekwani mpanza (Chequani), a lieutenant of segment 10. Among the enemies are Ngoka Lukhezo zulu (Goka), a lieutenant of segment 4, and Kamzembe maiemesa (Camsembe), regional governor in segment 10.[123] The elucidation of this cleavage is further complicated by the fact that from 1889 until 1898 Mpezeni lived at least most of the time not with his great wife but with his favourite, the leader of the subsidiary bevy in segment 15.[124] He may have done this to place himself at a distance from Wiese, who had a store at the headquarters of segment 4, Mpezeni's father's great wife's village, and from the North Charterland, whose Fort Young was just outside the headquarters of segment 10, his own great wife's village. There is, however, no definite evidence for this.

Regarding the Europeans for the moment as external agents, we can see how inter-African relations were affected by them. Within the chiefdom the most striking phenomenon was the prohibition on raiding imposed by the Whites. It was this which appears to have accentuated the cleavage between Mpezeni and his sons and which may have given Nsingu an external object of attack formidable enough to unite him with his brothers. The Ngoni State was essentially a military one and each successive generation of leaders needed to glorify themselves in battle. Mpezeni at the end of his life, his battles over, could well favour peace but his sons had still to demonstrate their valour and swell their segments with captives. The prohibition on raiding struck at at the root of the State, socially as well as economically. External relations changed their content, and neighbouring chiefs were able to visit Ngoniland unmolested. A more significant change of relation was attempted when Chabisa tried to unite the Fort Jameson and northern Nyasaland groups of Ngoni against the Europeans. Chabisa failed, but even so Ngoni re-established contact with the Ndebele after a lapse of some sixty-five years as the direct result of European action.

In all this the Arabs played only a minor part. Some Arabs traded with Mpezeni for slaves, and Ngoni used sometimes to raid Arab caravans. This we know from Deare, who saw an Arab with Mpezeni and to whom Nsingu related the story of a successful attack on a caravan. Deare mentions that this Arab tried to influence Mpezeni against him.[134] Apart from this, there is little information on their dealings with this group of Ngoni. The main struggle between Administration and Arabs was fought out at

[123] 187, fo. 137. cf. Winterbottom, 'Histories', p. 20.
[124] Angus, 'Northern Angoniland', p. 79.
[134] Deare, 'Slave raiders', 27 April and 4 May.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

the reigning chief is the grandson of the founder of the county segment, there is one minor segment founded by his father within which he has founded his own segment. In counties where there have been more than three successive heads of the segment, there will be more than one segment intervening between the county segment and that of the reigning chief. With the decline in polygyny, most chiefs have had only one bevy of wives or even a single wife, so that they have been each able to found only one segment. It will be convenient to speak of 'chief's segment' for a segment founded by a reigning chief, and of 'regal segment' for a segment founded by a former chief. With this nomenclature, each chief's segment becomes regal on the death of its founder.

This terminology links up with our use of the terms *regal* and *chief's villages*, as I have defined them elsewhere.[24] The headquarters of a regal segment is a regal village, and the headquarters of a chief's segment is a chief's village. Similarly the headquarters of a county segment is a capital village.

In general we may refer to capital, regal and chief's villages collectively as royal villages, for they represent the chieftainship, and the history of the State, as against the diverse particular interests represented by the villages led by commoners. Four minor chiefs are, however, not agnatic descendants of Zwangendaba, and we can call their segments and villages royal only with qualification. Two of these four chiefs use the royal descent-name, and they all generally ally themselves with their royal colleagues. Yet there are many Ngoni in these pseudo-royal counties, particularly true agnatic descendants of Zwangendaba or of regional governors, who are scornful of the royal pretensions of their county chiefs.

Some of the junior kinsmen of Zwangendaba became leaders of independent Ngoni groups. None of the junior sons of Mpezeni I became independent leaders but some of them or their descendants did become county chiefs. None of the junior sons of Nsingu or Mpezeni II became chiefs and under the present system none of them is likely to do so. Nevertheless they founded segments, and this has happened in every junior line. In each county, as well as the county, regal and chief's segments, whose founders have been on the direct line of succession to the chieftainship, there are also segments founded by junior members of the chiefly house. These we shall term *cadet segments* and the headquarters of a cadet segment a *cadet village*.

[24] Barnes, 'Fort Jameson Ngoni', pp. 204-6. In an earlier publication, 'Political development', p. 106, I used the adjective *private* in place of *regal* and *chief's*.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

611 643 reigning lord of the segment. It is probable that in this instance the divergence of interest had been increased by the shooting of Nsingu, for Mpezeni II, son of Nsingu and grandson of Mpezeni I, was only a young boy and in the hands of guardians who were commoners and who might respond to pressure from their ward's father's paternal half-brother. So far as can be gathered from the published account of the meeting called by the Administration to [648] discuss the matter, the young Paramount was supported by the lords of segments 12, 14 and 17 and by the senior lieutenants of segment 10. He was opposed by the heads of segments 9, 13 and 16 and by the senior lieutenant of segment 4. Segment 15 seems not to have taken part in the dispute. Thus the main cleavage appears to have been between segments 10 and 12 on the one hand and the residue of 4 on the other. Segment 13, in terms of its structural position, was on the wrong side; this may have been connected with the fact that the regional governor of Mpezeni I who led segment 13 was born in the headquarters of segment 4. After a quarrel about succession to his father's office of lieutenant in that segment, he moved to segment 10 where he found favour with the chief and was later promoted to regional governor. In the 1903 dispute he apparently transferred his support back to his natal segment.[1]

The attempt to assume the name Zwangendaba failed. The young chief's supporters outnumbered their opponents at the meeting and his spokesmen argued that he had been recognized by all the other chiefs and by the Administration as Paramount of the whole Ngoni country. If his rival took the name he would be led to usurp the authority of the young Paramount. The Native Commissioner then ruled that the name could not be taken.

643 611 754 669 578 Throughout his reign Mpezeni II was opposed by a half-brother, a son of Nsingu by a different mother. This man was older than Mpezeni and claimed that his mother had really been Nsingu's great wife, or at least that Nsingu had intended to make her so before he was shot in 1898. This rivalry took two forms. He endeavoured to bring destruction to the chief and his cattle by sorcery, and on one occasion made what seems to have been a half-hearted attempt to kill him with a spear. At the same time he endeavoured to establish his own segment as a county of its own, and in this he was assisted by others who fancied themselves as chief of the proposed new county.[2] The sorcery failed, not only because it was merely sorcery, but also because sorcery and

[1] *N.E.R.G.G.*, i, 4 (1 August 1903), Supplement. See p. 35.
[2] See pp. 143*f*.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

divination are not well developed among the Ngoni as means of influencing action. The attempt to establish a new county failed for lack of Administrative support. Chiefs still continue to express their rivalries through sorcery, and would-be chiefs still attempt to establish new counties.

When Mpezeni II died, his heir was still young and was out of the country at boarding-school. A minor chief, after quarrelling with one of the dead chief's lieutenants about the funeral arrangements, proposed that the heir should remain at school to finish his education and that meanwhile there should be a regency. However the Administration arranged for the immediate return of the heir.

The rivalry between the Paramount Chief and his minor chiefs shows itself in other less dramatic ways. Thus the Paramount Chief's advisers told me that all cases coming on appeal from the courts of minor chiefs were heard in the Paramount Chief's own court of first instance, and that only if the verdict given there was not accepted was the case referred to the Appeal Court which was held at the administrative centre of the Paramount Chief's county every month. The minor chief's and their advisers told me that cases sent on appeal from them went direct to the Native Appeal Court, and emphasized that this court was composed of several minor chiefs and their councillors, called upon in rotation. In practice, as I observed in the course of my work, sometimes one procedure was followed, sometimes the other.

On the other hand, the minor chiefs and other politically important people support the Paramount Chief in his relations with the Administration. When recently Ngoni thought that the Administration was not treating the Paramount Chief with the respect due to his position, two minor chiefs endeavoured to organize a petition to the Administration on the matter. When the Paramount Chief's deputy was put in prison by the Administration for embezzlement, it was a minor chief who protested most strongly to the Administration. However dissatisfied the minor chiefs and people may be with any particular Paramount Chief, there is little dissatisfaction with the Paramount Chieftainship. This is still the feature of their organization which in Ngoni eyes most clearly marks them off from their neighbours, and which most clearly links them in their present lowly condition to the exploits of their illustrious forefathers.

3. *The chief's advisers*

The men who advise the chief, who enjoy his confidence and his hospitality, belong to a number of different categories. In each

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

and is not to be treated as if he were the mere husband of a kinswoman. Indeed, all marital affairs of chiefs tend to have political significance; they are much discussed in the tribe and are the particular concern of senior lieutenants of counties. A recent incident illustrates how in relations with his affines a chief is bound by the instructions of his political advisers. A chief hit his wife while drinking beer in her brother's house. Her father reprimanded him. At a meeting held to discuss the quarrel, the county lieutenants and a kinsman of the chief, his father's deputy, ordered the woman's father to pay two beasts to the chief. The chief himself said nothing. A week or so later the man offered the beasts to the chief who said he did not want them. Just over a year later the chief's kinsman complained to the chief that the beast[12] had not been paid. The chief replied that he did not want the cattle and that at the meeting he had wanted his wife's father to be merely cautioned. His kinsman said that despite this he would call the lieutenants who had taken the original decision and get them to ask the woman's father why he had not paid. Hearing this, the man offered a beast which was accepted.[13]

Thus it is the chief in his position as head of a major segment and a county who is honoured with beer and whose marriages are protected, and not the chief as a bibulous aristocrat. The chief himself does not drink all, or even any, of the beer presented to him but he is responsible for dispensing it. A chief who acts like a commoner and wanders through his villages seeking beer risks the reprimands of his lieutenants, for it is difficult to refuse a chief beer under those conditions. A chief should not visit his people's villages unless they invite him, or unless he has at least warned them of his intention.

The gifts received by a chief from returned labour migrants are sometimes cited as a modern form of tribute, but while these presents may be more expensive in pecuniary terms than beer, they do not have the same great social importance. The shirt or hat presented by a man recently back from Southern Rhodesia may bring him favourable attention from the chief, but the present is made by an individual and arises from his own political aspirations. So far as I could tell, such presents are not effective as bribes. On the other hand, the presentation of beer is an affirmation of a relationship between a social group, often a village or division, and a political office, and most of those affected directly

[12] At the meeting two beasts were asked for, but a year later only one beast was mentioned.

[13] cf. Barnes, *Marriage*, for the political significance of affinal ties.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

In contrast to this, the private affairs of the chieftainship, matters connected with royal cattle, disputes among the chief's wives and quarrels between the chief and his affines or close supporters are discussed at the chief's village. Quarrels of an apparently trivial nature, such as a chief's wife's running away with a lorry driver, would in the old days have threatened the whole internal structure of the county segment, and they are still treated as questions of State by the lieutenants and kinsmen of the chief who attend these meetings. The contrast between these two kinds of assembly is striking. They are described by different vernacular terms,[24] and while any man can attend and speak at a meeting at the court, it would be considered inappropriate for him to intervene in a meeting at the chief's village unless his position in the old residential system was a high one. Women listen to court meetings, but rarely if ever speak, for the Administration works very largely through men and it is men who discuss the kinds of thing in which the Administration is interested. At the chief's village, the interests of the chief's kinswomen and wives are often directly concerned and they themselves contribute to the discussion. The marriages of chiefs established, and to a lesser extent do still reinforce and establish, affinal ties which cut across the cleavages between segments and which were crucial to the balance of power within the State. A quarrel between a chief and his wife was a matter of political, and not merely domestic, significance and must therefore be discussed by the chief's political advisers.

The sanction of deportation appears to be employed only in connexion with offences against the chieftainship. Thus a lieutenant who embezzled some royal cattle was called before a meeting at his chief's village attended by the important lieutenants in the county, and ordered to leave the country. Similarly, a man who was found drinking with a chief's wife under suspicious circumstances was ordered to leave the country by a tribunal of this kind. He moved first to another county, but was forced to move on again out of Ngoniland. Such actions are sometimes taken without reference to recognized Native Courts or to the Administration, and the effectiveness of the tribunal's decision depends on the support it has from the people as a whole and from the Native Authority organization rather than on the ultimate sanctions wielded by the Administration. However, when matters of this

[24] A meeting to discuss matters of general interest is *msonkhano*; one to discuss affairs of the chieftainship is *lusonkho*. cf. *ku-sonkhana*, to assemble (Nyanja) and *i(li)bandla*, assembly (Zulu). The different derivation of the words, from Nyanja and Zulu, is significant. *Lusonkho* also means age-set.

1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

696 In the court itself the magnitude of the penalties imposed and damages awarded is to some extent at the discretion of the court, and political considerations, among others, may influence judgments. Adultery with the wife of a chief is more heavily punished [681] than ordinary adultery, and people from other tribes, particularly [186] the Yao, are discriminated against. Ngoni courts maintain that they recognize only Ngoni law, even though the disputants may belong to other tribes. These ideas are familiar enough, but they indicate that questions of group membership, that is, political affiliation, and relations between groups, do influence the actions of the court. Within a county, hostility between a group having [578] the ear of the court and one lacking it may find expression in procedural obstructions, such as always hearing a particular suit at the end of a day, or of continually postponing the hearing because some minor witness is absent.

661 The chief and his advisers usually endeavour to maintain a 648 monopoly of access to the Administration, and this endeavour is 696 largely supported by the Administration as a matter of policy. In the particular sphere of legal action, appeal from the Native Court to the District Officer is sometimes regarded as a challenge to this monopoly, and litigants are sometimes punished for stating that they intend to appeal. In a celebrated recent case when a chief was successfully sued in the District Commissioner's court for damages for adultery, his people came to him afterwards to express their condolences, as after a funeral, at the injury done to his high office by this procedure.

692 Native Courts are formally recognized under Ordinance by 648 the Administration, and hence changes in the indigenous legal system brought about by the Administration are legal changes, in that they have behind them all the paraphernalia of Ordinances, Letters Patent, Orders-in-Council, and Acts of the United Kingdom Parliament. This gives a special quality to manipulation of the legal system by the Administration, for this is really only another way of saying that effective sovereignty lies with the British Crown and not with Paramount Chief Mpezeni. But within the framework of analysis of the local situation, the actions of the Administration and of the chiefs in controlling the working of the courts are comparable sociologically.

The Administration is continually exercised about the quality of the work done in Native Courts, and in so far as all cases heard in Native Courts are subject to revision by the District Commissioner a direct check is, or could be, exerted on the way in which the courts operate. But Administrative intervention goes further

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

been the case. It could be argued that the unsettled conditions on the northward journey made it necessary to modify rules of succession in favour of the 'strong man'. Europeans have tried to detect an element of popular choice in the appointment of the *inkosi*, or at least of a popular verdict in favour of or against a proposed candidate. Another element suggested by Ngoni informants was nomination of his heir by the dying Paramount.

643

There were, however, certain principles which were clear in the accounts given by informants. One was that immediately on the death of a Paramount a regent took charge of the country, of the office of the Paramount, and of the person of the heir elect, and also of the funeral rites of the dead Paramount. The provision for a regency allowed for a period of delay before announcing the successor. There was no 'The king is dead. Long live the king.' The office of the Paramount was clearly in suspense during this interregnum which had been known to last a few days, a few months, or even years—the last in the case of a successor who was a minor. During this period the regent was responsible for carrying on the work of the Paramount, and for consultation with heads of leading clans about the successor. In the past the regent was usually a brother of the dead Paramount. The traditions of the central Ngoni were, as we have seen, that after Ngwana had led them out of the south, he died before crossing the Zambesi. Two of his brothers, Magadlera who died before the Zambesi crossing and Mgoola who died near Domwe, successively acted as regents until Mputa was old enough to enter his father's place. When the time came for the end of the interregnum, it was the regent's responsibility to summon the people and present the heir to them as the new Paramount.

The assumption of authority by a regent and the provision for an interregnum make it clear that the identity of the successor was seldom a foregone conclusion even though the heir-apparent stood with a spear at his father's grave. Among the principles of succession which determined the choice of the new Paramount, one was that he should come from the big house. This could be 'arranged' by adopting him into it if there was no likely heir who had been born there. Another principle was a less easily defined qualification, that of suitability. This was discussed by the regent with the leading clan heads, who took into account the wishes of the late Paramount and the character and personality already displayed by the proposed successor, who had stood by his father's grave. Informants made it clear that responsibility for this selection weighed heavily on the regent and the leading men, for the choice once made was final, the power of the Paramount was very great, the 'medicines' used at his accession set him aside as a person of potential supernatural power, and the prosperity of the country and of everyone in it depended on this decision.

643
578

Two famous cases of disputed succession in the past had led to major

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

643
578

divisions of the Ngoni kingdoms. The first occurred in the north on the death of Zwangendaba, when his brother Ntabeni became regent, and this dispute revolved round the principle that the heir should come from the big house. It led to the final split between Mpeseni and Mbelwa, the setting up of two kingdoms, and the giving of the '*Bayete*' to two Paramounts of the Jere clan. The following account was given by Chief Mtwalo Jere, son of the Mtwalo mentioned, and he told it to me in his own village of Ezondweni. It brings out the function and position of the regent; the relation of 'house' to 'village'; the influence of the popular verdict on the choice of a successor; the magnanimous attitude of other possible rivals for the Paramountcy; and the effect of personal quarrels on a national matter.

¶ Ntabeni went to the house of Munene, the mother of Mbelwa. She insulted him and would not give him beer. Zwangendaba went to bathe and when he returned Ntabeni said to him 'I have been insulted by your wife. She called me "Sutu".' This is a great insult among the Ngoni.[1] Zwangendaba was very angry, and he took a pan and fried groundnuts, and said to his wife 'You must take the groundnuts in your hand.' Her hands were very burnt because the groundnuts were too hot. 'You are burnt because you must not abuse this your brother-in-law. You are punished.' Zwangendaba died. Ntabeni was taking care of the country. He was the right man to put the *inkosi*. He said to Mbelwa: 'You are not a chief because your mother abused me.' So Mpeseni was *inkosi*, and the second was Mtwalo. They chased away Mbelwa. When Mpeseni was elected to be *inkosi* all the people were complaining because they said the chieftainship should be for the village of Elangeni. The people of Elangeni and of Ekwendeni did not want Mpeseni as *inkosi*.

Ntabeni died. The people of Elangeni and of Ekwendeni wanted to fight Ntabeni's people because they were not told of his death, and when he was buried they were not there. The Ntabeni people went away to Tanganyika. All the rest left Ufipa and came to Cidlodlo. Mpeseni and Mperembe stayed there and the rest came to Coma. Then Mperembe returned from Mpeseni.

Mtwalo said to Mbelwa 'You are the right man to be *inkosi*. I am not the right man because through jealousy Ntabeni gave the *inkosi* to Mpeseni.' Then they gave '*Bayete*' to Mbelwa.

Cibambo, whose father was *mlomo wenkosi* (mouthpiece of the chief) in Ekwendeni for old Mtwalo mentioned above, confirmed this part of the story of the succession and the role played by Ntabeni as regent. He also gave in his book [2] the most coherent account of an earlier dispute about which wife of Zwangendaba was the big wife—a dispute which illustrated the significance of the house in the succession.

[1] Bryant, in *Olden Times in Zululand and Natal*, said (p. 134) that 'Sutu' was an insult because it meant 'barbarian'—one who had not had his ears pierced according to the custom of the Zulu.

[2] Cibambo, Y. M. *My Ngoni of Nyasaland*. London, 1942, chaps. V & VI.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

643
578

A disputed succession in the central kingdom arose over a struggle between Cikusi, the son of the Paramount Mputa, and Cifisi, the son of the regent Cidyawonga who took care of the kingdom after Mputa's death. When the regent died, his son Cifisi claimed the succession and war broke out between the followers of the two claimants. After fighting had continued through two generations of claimants the state under Cifisi seceded and became independent, though the '*Bayete*' was only given to Cikusi and his descendants of Mputa's main line. The following account was given in the royal village of the central kingdom by a former regent assisted by an official reciter of tradition. It related to the succession to Mputa, who died in the Songea district of Tanganyika, and to the defeat of these Ngoni by the followers of Zulu Gama. After this defeat the Ngoni under Cidyawonga returned to the west side of the lake and built on Domwe mountain.

« When they burned the body of Mputa, Cidyawonga stood with Cikusi, and that was the sign that Cikusi was still young but was *inkosi*. Cidyawonga was the brother of Mputa. The people told Cidyawonga 'We are in war. You must help us.' They took Cikusi and put him in the big house, because there were no children there.

Cidyawonga was the regent when they built on Domwe. When he was about to die he said to the people 'Now I leave this country in the hands of the owner, because I was only appointed to keep it for him. This is your leader.' He sent for Cikusi and gave him his father's spear, saying to him 'This country is yours.' He said to Cifisi, his own son, 'You my son do not struggle with Cikusi. He is the only Paramount here.' Cidyawonga we did not burn because he had cared for the Paramountcy. And when Cidyawonga died we put Cikusi in his place.

643

The relation between the regent and the Paramount emerged again from the confusion following the death of Paramount Gomani I in 1896 at the hands of the British. The record in the *Ncheu District Note Book* said that authority was divided between the dead Paramount's brother, Mandala, and NaMlangeni, the mother of Cikusi the former Paramount. After the Portuguese-Nyasaland boundary was fixed dividing the Ngoni territory, the Portuguese entered their section to administer it. NaMlangeni and Mandala resisted their entry and were taken prisoners and died. Meantime a big *mulumuzana* of Paramount Gomani I had acted as regent for his heir who had been placed in the big house. The following account by the treasurer of Gomani II described the situation during the early years of the minority of the Paramount.

« Chief Gomani II was born in 1893. The country was destroyed by the Europeans when this child was three years old, and he was taken care of by the big *mulumuzana* of his father, Cakumbira Mpalale Ndau. When the war of the Europeans had finished, they built the village of Lizulu, near Mlanda mountain, where the Dutch mission is today. The child was with them in that village.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

614 The Ngoni were, as I have said, emphatic that the names on this second list should be included among the Swazi clans. It was headed in the northern kingdom by the royal clan and in the central kingdom by one of the most honoured clans, and all the clan names were in fact held in great respect. There are three possible explanations for their non-occurrence in the Kuper and Bryant lists. One is that the clan name and the *isitakazelo*, the ceremonial or address name, may have been interchanged, and the original clan name forgotten. Another explanation may be that fission of the clans took place on the march, and as a result new clan names appeared. Both these were likely and may account for some of the omissions. The third reason may be that on the march and after settlement the Ngoni may have forgotten the correct pronunciation even of their famous clan names, and the anthropologist may have made mistakes in transcribing them.

Reference was made earlier in the chapter to the fact that social mobility was found among the Ngoni aristocracy. One form in which this took place affected the position of individuals belonging to the royal clan. In the northern kingdom the chiefs as well as the Paramount all belonged to the royal clan, and descendants of the sons and grandsons of Zwangendaba and his brothers were found all over the kingdom. In the central kingdom, where none of the chiefs were of the royal clan, the descendants of Cidyawonga, the brother of Cikusi, were in the secession state under Chief Kacindamoto, and the children of the brothers of Cikusi and Gomani I were most of them living in the Portuguese Ngoni kingdom. Thus there were large numbers of the royal clan in the northern kingdom, some in the family groups of the chiefs, others living in their own or other villages; while in the central kingdom members of the royal clan were comparatively few in number and were excluded from all political power unless they were of the Paramount's immediate family. Members of other Swazi clans in the north felt they had to assert themselves against the dominance of the royal clan in social as well as political life. In the central kingdom it was the royal clan who asserted themselves socially because they had no political rights in the chiefdoms.

614 578 574 There was a general opinion that individuals bearing the royal clan name who were not of the immediate family of the Paramount or, in the north, were not among his subordinate chiefs, ought not to trade on their name. This meant in effect expecting to get hospitality and other formal recognition when visiting other villages. As one informant said 'If they come to a village they like people to tremble and say "A chief has come".' They wanted to be recognized everywhere as *makosana*, children of chiefs. The popular resistance to these claims came from two sources. One was the general public who did not see why an ever-increasing number of people bearing the royal clan name should get free food and beer—gifts which they would not hesitate to give to people

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

they acknowledged as rulers or direct sons of rulers. The other opposition came from the heads of the Swazi clans who saw their claims to recognition threatened by large numbers of these *makosana*. When such a person was announced a *mukumuzana* might comment to bystanders 'Who is this man? We do not know his father.' Then to save his face as well as that of the visitor, he would send a greeting to him and order beer to be supplied, while avoiding any elaborate form of entertainment. This subtle form of resistance to what were considered undue claims from lesser members of the royal clan was found everywhere.

In both kingdoms the Paramounts and chiefs, especially after 1933, appointed as officials for the kingdom and for the royal village, members of Swazi clans, but also, and increasingly, members of cis-Zambesi and local clans. This practice brought together in the royal villages and in the chiefs' villages men of the ruling aristocracy and men of the lesser clans, to share administrative responsibility, to assist on ceremonial occasions, and to take part on an equal footing in giving and receiving hospitality. This mingling on the official level was one of the reasons why marriages became more frequent between girls of Swazi clans and men of non-Swazi clans whose fathers had been promoted to official positions. The marriage of Paramount Gomani II's daughter to the son of his treasurer was an illustration of this. The daughters of families of Swazi clans were also sought in marriage by men of non-Swazi clans who, through their education, had got well-paid work in the Government or in commercial firms, and could therefore afford to give cattle for *lobola* for the girls. These were two instances of the type of marrying up which in the 1930's was lessening the sharp division in social life between Swazi and other clans. We shall see in Chapter IV, pp. 137, 140) that Ngoni fathers of daughters married to non-Swazi clansmen found a way of keeping their married daughters, as well as their sons, in their villages, particularly in the central kingdom.

Though the Ngoni clan system in the 1930's was, in Dr. Kuper's phrase, 'neither precise nor static', it was an integral part of Ngoni social organization. It was closely related on the one hand to the ruling aristocracy, and on the other to the social hierarchy. Both in the villages and in the national life of the kingdoms individuals belonging to Swazi clans played a leading part in social and ceremonial life, and carried on those distinctive Ngoni practices which their ancestors had brought with them from the south.

2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956

FR5 Ngoni FR5

Maravi FR4

N 182 233 565 563 578

The relation of cattle-ownership to social integration, which was so marked a feature of Ngoni society, was limited to the Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans. There was evidence that the acquisition of herds by former captives and by the local Cewa and other tribes created conflicts within the society. The following statement was made by an Ntumba village headman, commenting on several court cases relating to cattle-ownership. The reference in the last sentence is to the Ngoni practice in the ownership of cattle.

"Sometimes people say 'If your father was caught and was the slave of a certain person, and also if your mother was caught and was a slave of another man, then if you buy cattle and put them in the kraal of your father, those who caught your father say "These cattle are mine (or ours)." And those who caught your mother say "These cattle are ours." ' They all say so because it was they who caught your ancestors. So those cattle do not recognize their real owner. And sometimes those cattle do not bear well, and sometimes they just die.

Then perhaps you die and leave your cattle, and those people are quarrelling to find out who is the owner of those cattle, since there are three people who want those same cattle: your father, the one who caught your father, and the one who caught your mother.

And it is really best if there are many masters that you, a child, should not buy cattle, but just leave off because they are a source of trouble. But one who is a free man without any masters, he ought to buy cattle because there will be no trouble for him.

M 233 578 604

Among the local Cewa tribes, when a man wanted to start a herd and had money to buy cattle, he was expected to give the money to his *malume* (mother's brother) who then bought the cattle and took charge of them and regarded them as his.[1] This assertion of ownership of cattle bought with another man's money was part of the services to which the mother's brother was entitled from his sister's children, in return for services which he had performed or would perform for them. If those relationships between a man and his *malume* were not working smoothly and the *malume* was not helping his nephew, there was a tendency for the man to turn to his own father and give him the money, and vest the ownership of the cattle in him, often because the father had paid the school fees or a court fine for his son. When the *malume* realized that his position had been usurped and that his chance of owning cattle had gone, his dislike of the man's father and his family showed itself in jealousy and quarrels between the two individuals and friction between the families. The Cewa matrilineal *mbumba* as a cattle-owning group under a senior man had not the continuity of the Ngoni house, for an *mbumba* was said to be 'finished' when a woman and all

M 233 578

[1] The Cewa believed that if cattle were to survive and increase, they had to be owned and cared for by senior men. On the highlands round Dedza the Cewa had had cattle before the Ngoni came.

siderable latent, and at times overt, antagonism from the younger towards the older group. This was to some extent mitigated by the dominant interest as well as occupation in cattle-herding. The head herd-boys were people of importance, called in for consultations with the adults who were cattle-owners. They assisted at the killing of beasts and went with them to market when beasts were sold. These older boys, despite their dominance, were heroes to the younger ones, and basked in an aura of hero-worship. They took good care to build up their claims to be thought of as 'big ones', with proven feats of strength, vaunted knowledge about cattle, skill in leading dances, and reputations as lady-killers.

The younger boys found some outlet for their aggressive impulses in the stick fighting, which was a recognized sport. They fought with 'rods', like single-sticks, and became adept at attack and defence. It was alleged that in the old days there was no redress for broken heads or bruises. As the elders said: 'They were learning to fight when young. There was no man ignorant of this learning. This school for fighting made strength in the body.' The clash of sticks could be heard out on the grazing grounds by day or in the evening on the edge of the village when the cattle were safely in the kraal. Skill in stick-fighting was one of the ways in which leadership among the younger boys was acknowledged. It was a kind of knock-out championship, hotly contested, until everyone agreed: 'That one—he has excelled.' Boys going to school took their sticks and knobkerries with them in case they were challenged on the path, but they were careful to hide them in the bushes just before arriving at the school.

Boys' life in the village

When the boys went to live in the dormitory they did not only escape from the women's world into a boys' circle. They entered the fringe of the men's world and provided they conducted themselves with propriety they could sit on the edge of the men's group at the kraal gate and listen to talk about men's affairs.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

572 than dissolved. The element of secrecy in the confidence exchanged gave the girls a much-needed sense of privacy, and the freedom of being able to say anything to the friend was a relief from the constant guard on speech and manners.

535 The girls had dance-groups, and practised dancing in or near a compound. Each group had an 'owner' who called 571 the others together and organized the dancing. These were several dance-groups, in contrast with the boys' single group, [578] and the girls' groups were often rent by internal quarrels, leading to splits in the groups.

865 The dance-groups, and other little knots of girls, often had violent quarrels in which all their latent aggression came to the surface. They shouted at each other, scratched each other's faces and burst into tears of anger and frustration. If senior Ngoni women were around when these scenes took place, they generally broke in and rebuked the 'owner' of the group and sent them all home. Sometimes they deliberately turned their backs, leaving the girls to fight it out among themselves, or hoping the 'owner' would restore order. The senior women, rather unobtrusively as a rule, kept an eye on the girls in their dance-groups and at other times, and were adept at summing up their characters and looking out for signs of leadership and of ability to control others.

157 One type of leadership was often shown when a girl collect- 538 ed younger children together, for singing, games or for tell- 555 ing stories in a recitative form with a refrain in which the others joined. There was a certain kind of skill in reciting these stories, recognized alike by the children listening and by adults watching from a distance. The Ngoni believed that this skill was due to a gift for eloquence, not so far removed from the eloquence of the man who chanted the praises of the chiefs, or the man who composed his own songs. This eloquence was said to come 'from the chest'. Ngoni men and women passing a group of children spellbound at the recital of a story would say: 'Ha! look at that one. She has that which is of the chest—real eloquence.'

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

contributed by the whole nation, were not found among the Ngoni.

Informants are agreed that in the old days young men and women married whom they were told and never attempted to make their own choice against their parents' will. From evidence available this seems to be an oversimplification. It seems likely that individual choice mattered less in those days than it does now, but it cannot have been entirely inoperative. It is said that each regiment of men used to flirt with its corresponding women's regiment, and that marriages sometimes followed. Wiese says that among the aristocratic families a woman had the right to choose her own husband, but that this right was dying out and it was becoming the practice to marry off daughters so as to secure the most marriage cattle and maintain upper-class endogamy.[3] It is true that on the evidence of genealogies there do not seem to have been many marriages between very aristocratic women and the most recently captured men, and that therefore we are justified in assuming a tendency towards upper-class endogamy, but this tendency seems not to have been very strong and indeed there never was a clear-cut upper class but instead a method of ranking families in terms of ethnic origin. My informants never suggested that a man would marry his daughter so as to bring in as many cattle as possible, and it seems unlikely that this was ever a common motive.[4]

A girl was expected to be chaste before she was married. From the procedure adopted by the Zulu and from information from other Ngoni groups, it seems likely that girls were examined at marriage to check that they had not been deflowered. Rattray records this among the Ngoni of Southern Nyasaland,[5] and Read makes a similar statement.[6] My own informants had such faith in the sexual rectitude of the past as contrasted with the promiscuity of the present that it was difficult to establish what they really thought happened. It seems that unmarried people were allowed intercourse *inter crura* and that this was considered not a violation of chastity. The whole question has been obscured by the conflict of values between the South-Eastern Bantu leaders, whose view appeared to have prevailed at the time, and the recent captives from the Cewa and kindred peoples, who believed that a girl would die if she did not copulate at puberty. We shall see the outcome of this conflict when we come to discuss modern marriage.

As might be anticipated in a system in which marriage is a transfer of fertility, a wife was expected to be fertile. If she was barren special procedures were adopted to validate the substance of the marriage. A man could appeal to his wife's relatives for another

[3] Wiese, op. cit. 'Expediçao . . .', p. 473 and 'Geschichte . . .', p. 191.
[4] See below, p. 120.
[5] Rattray, *Some folk-lore stories and songs in Chinyanja, with English translation and notes*, S.P.C.K., 1907, p. 115.
[6] Margaret Read, 'The Moral code of the Ngoni and their former military state', *Africa*, xi (1938), p. 6.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

837 578 believes that her husband is committing adultery with another woman she endeavours to find out who the woman is. If a women she usually refuses to speak to her when they meet, and if they are forced to come into contact, as at a beer party, there is likely to be a fight between them. A parturient woman may ask her midwife to pretend that there are difficulties in labour so that her husband can be called upon to confess his adultery and name his mistress.

864 The sexual aspect of marriage influences the training and experiences of children. The explanation given for moving children from their parents' hut to a dormitory at the age of six or seven is that by then children are 'wise enough' and will talk to their playmates about their parents' sexual activities in the hut. Girls aged [897] five years or so start to imitate the dances of their elders and to [533] join in the dance competitions when girls come from other villages. Many of the songs sung at these dances are concerned with various [535] aspects of sexual relations. At age ten, or sometimes earlier they also begin to practice the most important of the women's erotic dances, *cimwangalala*,[11] which is performed only indoors. At a 881 girl's first menstruation she is secluded for from a few days up to a 864 month, and is tested by women who have borne children to see that she can dance *cimwangalala* and other erotic dances effectively, that she knows the formalities of copulation, and how to behave when she menstruates. Even where the girl is secluded for the full month, and her training is accompanied by a great deal of symbolism and ceremonial, there is little reference to her potential fertility.

864 There is no formal instruction in sexual matters for boys, and there are no erotic dances for them. They learn their sexlore from their older companions in the bush or in the dormitory. The only [831] specific aspect of sexual maturation that appears to receive emphasis is the growth of large testicles, and boys brew themselves medicines to expedite this.

842 832 Both fertility and sexual satisfaction can be facilitated by the use of medicines. There is a well-known medicine for the cure of barrenness, and there are many kinds of aphrodisiacs.[12] A girl [864] learns the use of aphrodisiacs from other women in the village, and she is formally taught sexual behaviour by her puberty instructress.[13] The old woman who is in charge of her puberty seclusion, who is 881 sometimes the girl's grandmother, supervises the sexual behaviour 593 of the girl for the first few years of her married life. If, as a bride, she succeeds in forcing her husband to give her a present before she will lie with him, the present must be handed over to the puberty instructress the next morning. Later she may demonstrate her [535] erotic proficiency by dancing[14] in the hut before her husband and her instructress.

[11] Meaning, in Nsenga, 'the thing of you just sleeping' (i.e. copulating).
[12] Such as *mitololo*, a root, and *hajelejele*, a plant.
[13] *Mphungu*.
[14] The dance is called *cihapa*. Cf. Nyanja *hapahapa*, swinging backwards and forwards.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

her husband's village, the occasion must be recognized in a more elaborate manner. Her husband or his relatives buy her a new cloth. Wearing this cloth she stands at the door of her husband's hut, and is undressed by her husband's grandmother. The old woman rubs castor oil on her abdomen and dresses her again. A small girl from her husband's kin goes with her to her own village, and their arrival there, with the woman dressed in her new cloth, indicates formally to her parents that she is pregnant. They stay at the woman's village for about a week, and then return to her husband's village.[14] Her parents have thus been made socially aware of her pregnancy, and the man can legitimately look to them for help if she becomes ill or fractious.

If the woman does die in childbirth, her husband has to offer a beast to her parents even though they were told of her pregnancy.[15] The husband may confess to adultery when called upon to do so by the midwife, but this does not absolve him from the obligation to pay the beast. Confession absolves him from the charge of having caused the death of his wife by his careless behaviour, but he must still recompense his parents-in-law for the death of their daughter. It is recognized that a woman may die in childbirth despite the absence of adultery during pregnancy or despite full confession of adultery by both the woman and her husband. She dies just because God lets her die, and not because of any human misconduct. Yet she reaches the situation in which there is the danger of death because of her position as the wife of her husband. It is the 'work' of married women to bear children, and it is the 'work' of the husband if his wife dies in childbirth to offer a beast to her parents so that they may mourn their daughter.

5. Quarrels

We see then that a woman is not severed utterly from her own group when she marries, but that her kinsfolk retain an interest in her welfare and have certain rights in her and in her husband. The recognition of these rights by their son-in-law increases his esteem in their eyes, and enables him to appeal to them with confidence when he needs their support. The common interest of all is in the successful maintenance of the marriage, and the mutual recognition of rights and fulfilment of obligations consolidate the social relationships established between people related by marriage. Quarrels threaten the continued existence of the marriage, and it is therefore in the common interest that they should be settled as expeditiously as possible. The intervention of affines in a personal quarrel between husband and wife is characteristic of a system in which most neighbours are kinsfolk and in which the spatial concentration of people into compact villages, where abuse shouted at one

[14] This ceremony is called *ngayi*, which means 'breast-cloth' in Nsenga.
[15] See above, pp. 39f.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

end of the village can be heard at the other, ensures that all quarrels soon become public knowledge. The quarrels of any members of the village are known to, and in greater or lesser degree are the concern of, everyone else in the village. Beyond the confines of the village, kinsfolk living in neighbouring villages can soon be called in and in any case soon come to hear of a serious dispute. In a quarrel between man and wife there are certain restrictions on the extent to which affines can intervene, and there are certain regularities in the way in which they are brought into the ambit of the quarrel.

When a woman has a serious quarrel with her husband, she runs away. If the couple are living uxorilocally she may not go very far, and may take shelter with a friend or relative at the other end of the village but the consequences are much the same as if she had gone off to a kinsman several miles away. As a woman flees from the anger of one relative by seeking refuge with another or with her affines, so she flees from her husband to the shelter of a kinsman or kinswoman. Occasionally a woman will go to someone to whom she is bound only by bonds of quasi-kinship, as for example to a former playmate or school friend whom she addresses by a kinship term, but this is not common. If her husband makes no effort to persuade her to return, it is assumed that he does not want her back and that he is trying to trap her into committing adultery. A woman can sue for divorce if her husband has allowed her to stay away after a quarrel and has not tried to get her back again.

Case history 8

Abner was married to Esther and had paid the legalization payment. Abner suspected her of copulating with another man in the village and fought her. He then told her he was contemplating taking another wife. Esther ran off to her father's village about eight miles away and stayed there five months. Abner did not come to see her and she complained to the court. Abner was asked in court why he did not go to visit Esther and replied that he had had no time to do so as he had been ill. Esther said that Abner always suspected her of being a prostitute, but she wanted Abner as her husband; the trouble was that Abner did not want her or else he would have followed her to her village. The court agreed that Abner did not want Esther as a wife and was merely setting a trap for her, hoping to get damages for adultery when Esther had been left alone a long time. Abner was ordered to divorce his wife. He refused to do so, saying that he still liked her. Esther said that if Abner still wanted her he must come and live with her in her father's village where her father could see how he looked after her. Abner refused to go and live there. The court then divorced Esther without awarding any damages to Abner.

The correct behaviour for a husband when he finds that his wife has run away is to inquire from her friends in the village where she has gone, and then to hurry after her himself. It would not be considered right for him to send an intermediary; he must himself go and apologize. Arriving at the hut of the relative with whom his wife is sheltering, he does not speak to his wife but first asks the relative to intercede with her. They discuss the cause of the quarrel, and if it can be settled easily, as for instance when the man admits

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

578 602 that he was drunk when he quarrelled with his wife and did not mean what he said, the woman may agree to return. If she is adamant, or if a serious issue such as cruelty or adultery is involved, a formal discussion is held in the village of one or the other. Relatives come from both sides and a man of senior status convenes the meeting.[16] Sometimes it may be agreed that the offending spouse must pay nominal damages to the other. The usual procedure is to offer a chicken to the other, but sometimes a few shillings are given instead. If agreement cannot be reached at a meeting like this, the matter can either be referred to the court, or else the issue of the quarrel may be left unresolved in the hope that at some later date a solution may be possible. While the initiative in holding a village meeting lies with the senior relatives of the [694] couple, the only people who can take the matter to the court are the couple themselves. A father may sometimes handle the formalities of laying a case against his son-in-law on his daughter's behalf but it would be difficult for him to do so without her co-operation, and, on the man's side, it is only he and not his father or brother who can effectively sue his wife.

The interests of the two groups of relatives are centred on the successful maintenance of the marriage. It is considered more important that people should live together in peace without quarrelling than that the exact rights of one side or the other, even where these rights can be defined precisely, should be upheld. [684] A man who commits adultery may be censured by his father, who will perhaps refuse to speak to his son if he thinks that the stability of his son's marriage is threatened, even though it is admitted that the man's wife has no legal right to object to her husband's adultery. When there has been a quarrel people do not rush to hold a village meeting since, by doing so, the existence of the quarrel is formally recognized and its seriousness increased. It is better if possible to get the couple to 'change their character', that is, to become reconciled to each other on their own account. Until the woman's sudden departure indicates to the world that they have quarrelled, relatives are reluctant to interfere between man and wife. People gossip about the quarrels of married couples, but even their close kinsmen will hedge and say that these affairs are not their responsibility if pressed for an opinion. The action of the wife in running away is the mechanism by which she begins her appeal to her relatives for support, and she carries it a stage further by refusing to accept her husband's apologies. Finally if the settlement proposed at the meeting is not acceptable she appeals to the court. Men do not run away to their kinsmen and do not rely on relatives to the same extent as do their wives. Yet a man can if he wishes

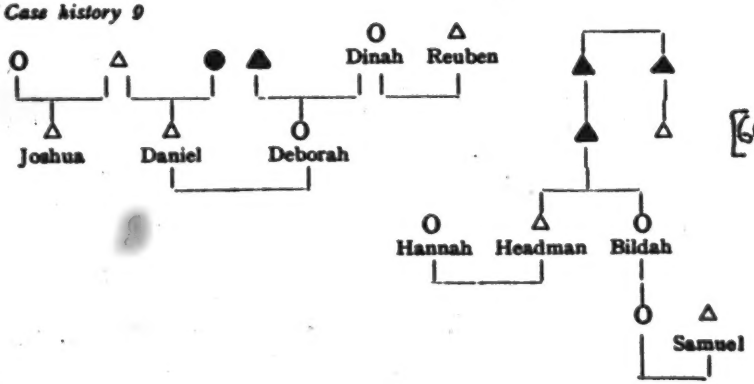
[792] [16] *Tanda*. This word is used of any formal meeting in a village to settle a quarrel, matrimonial or otherwise, before the issue is referred to the court. *Cf.* Nsenga *ku-tandala*, to talk or discuss.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

precipitate an open quarrel by staying away from his wife, by eating elsewhere or by threatening divorce. Fights in the village, provided the parties concerned do not hurry off to court, are dealt with first at a village meeting, and even where the combatants are not man and wife, the elucidation of the cause of the fight may bring to light a latent marital quarrel which must then be dealt with by the relatives. Accusations of adultery must be denied, and a woman may call in her relatives to protect her from the slander of a jealous woman.

The processes by which a quarrel between man and wife comes to light, and the attempts of kinsfolk to resolve the quarrel, are well illustrated by the following account of an adulterous wife.

Case history 9



Daniel was a labour migrant in Southern Rhodesia and his wife Deborah was living meanwhile in the village of her mother's husband Reuben. The headman of this village had himself returned from the railway line a year previously. At a beer party Deborah quarrelled with Hannah the headman's wife, who accused Deborah of sleeping with the headman and who started to fight her. A meeting was held in the village to settle the affair. Deborah denied that she had ever slept with the headman and the headman denied that he had ever slept with her. Hannah retorted that she did not like to see her husband running after other women and always talking to Deborah. Reuben and a neighbour of his said that they could say nothing in the matter as Deborah was a married woman, and they called on Joshua, who was Daniel's father's son, to speak. He had come from his own village to attend the meeting. Joshua said that Hannah had not actually caught Deborah sleeping with her husband the headman, and that therefore Hannah had done wrong in accusing Deborah without good reason. Hannah had also erred in making accusations that would make Deborah's brothers-in-law think that Deborah was committing adultery. The headman had also erred and should stop talking to Deborah, or else the brothers-in-law of Deborah would take him to court for drinking beer at night with Deborah, who was a married woman.

Hannah then admitted that she had done wrong in fighting Deborah. Another man in the village, Samuel, the headman's sister's daughter's husband, spoke, and said that Hannah must offer a chicken to Deborah because if Hannah had really known that Deborah was sleeping with the headman, surely she would have seen that Deborah was taken to court.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

518
607
159

Hannah sent her son to catch a chicken, which was put at the feet of Samuel and a lieutenant of the village, who called on Deborah to accept it. Deborah was stopped from doing so by Reuben, who said that the village was now a bad village since the headman had returned to it, and that he did not want his daughter to accept the chicken. The chicken was released, and the meeting broke up. Reuben subsequently explained his action by saying that if he had let Deborah take the chicken, there would be hatred between Deborah and Hannah, and more quarrels would ensue. People would quarrel in the village just to get chickens.

Two months later Daniel returned from Southern Rhodesia, and Deborah went back to Daniel's village to live with him there. Soon he quarrelled with her, and accused her of committing adultery while he was away. A meeting was held at the house of Daniel's father to deal with the quarrel. Daniel said that he had brought back with him medicine which he had put under Deborah's pillow while she was asleep. Under the influence of the medicine Deborah talked in her sleep and disclosed the names of the men with whom she had slept while Daniel had been away. Daniel said that he did not like to take these men to court on the evidence of this medicine alone. Reuben, who had been called from his village to attend the meeting, said that the matter was not one in which he could act and it was up to Daniel to decide what he wanted to do, as Deborah was his wife. Daniel's father said that as Deborah had children by Daniel she ought to be forgiven and warned not to do it again. The headman of Daniel's village observed that women had been committing adultery long before there was any labour migration, and that as this was Deborah's first offence she should just be warned. Daniel said that Deborah should be warned not in his village but in her own village, and that she should be warned not by himself or his father but by her father Reuben. Daniel wrote down the names of the people he had heard mentioned by Deborah, but he did not show this list at the meeting. An informant who claimed that he saw the list said that it contained, among others, the name of the headman of Reuben's village.

A month later a meeting was held in Reuben's village to continue the discussion. Some of the important people in the village attended, but not the headman or his lieutenant. This ommission was explained by Reuben as being because all the people concerned were Christians and they must decide it among themselves without reference to the headman, a pagan. Daniel's father opened the discussions by saying that Daniel wanted to know about the adulteries of Deborah while he was away in Southern Rhodesia. Daniel then said that he wanted to take to court the people who had slept with his wife. He had found medicines in the house on his return, and these he produced as evidence. He said he had asked his wife what sort of medicines these were, and at first she had refused to tell him. He had pressed her and she had then said that some were medicines she had got from people in another country for headache, and that others were roots of love medicine she had got from other women in the village. Daniel said he did not believe his wife when she told him this, as a woman would not make love medicine if her husband were away. He had found other medicines hidden in the roof of the storehouse which Deborah had refused to explain to him.

Deborah spoke and said that she admitted sleeping with two men, Gideon and Balaam. (They were both men from other villages.) Another man from the village, the headman's father's father's brother's son, who had been invited to the meeting (but who was not a Christian) said that these people Gideon and Balaam ought to be taken to court as Daniel had suggested, for a case like this could not be settled in the village.

Daniel then went on to say that he thought his wife was pregnant and he wanted to know who had impregnated her. Deborah said that she was sure it was Gideon and Balaam who had made her pregnant. Daniel's father remarked that they had best wait before bringing a case against

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Gideon as Gideon's village was on the point of moving from one county to another and they wanted to begin the case in the right court.

Dinah, Deborah's mother, addressed her daughter:

'My daughter, ever since I married my husband, I have never committed adultery with anyone who was not my husband, and I have never asked anyone to give me medicines so that Reuben would love me. My husband loves me because I obey him, and he looks after me well. In addition he looks after you, who are not his real daughter. Believe my words, when Reuben dies, you will not find me married to such a good husband who can look after me and all my children. I used to tell you not to drink beer all night long because your husband was away working. You did not obey me, and see now you have done wrong to both parents, your own parents and the parents of your husband. We will regard you as a bad child who has not been well instructed; and the parents of your husband will regard us as bad people for not instructing you well. Now it is up to you because you are a fully grown person.'

Daniel's father said that the men who had made Deborah pregnant would be punished by the court, and that now Daniel and Deborah must be told to live in peace. Daniel said that he had nothing more to say as the people who had been sleeping with his wife had been identified. He would take them to court and would live peacefully with his wife. The meeting then ended.

Two months later Daniel took Balaam to court, and Deborah and Balaam were each ordered to pay Daniel thirty shillings damages.

We see in this account the constant interest of the kinsfolk in maintaining the marriage. Divorce was never mentioned. Instead, Deborah was told to change her ways. Her father-in-law argued that she should be forgiven as she had already borne children to Daniel. Her mother's husband, although he was more diffident about the matter than if she had been his own daughter, tried to prevent her quarrel with Hannah from worsening when he prevented her taking the chicken offered her. Although Reuben was only her step-father Daniel considered him, rather than his own father, the proper person to deliver a reproof to Deborah.

Occasionally the aftermath of a marital quarrel is neither reconciliation nor divorce but a state of affairs we may call separation. If a wife runs away, or if her husband goes off to work and avoids her on his return, there may be attempts at reconciliation which may fail or there may even be no attempts. Not every woman in this position seeks divorce. Some still hope that their husbands will return, particularly if there are growing children to be cared for, while others may be bound by the rules of their religion against divorce. If a woman is old and does not wish to take another husband, she may be disinclined to take the trouble to obtain a divorce. It will be seen from Table IV that there are only a few women in this condition. They live with their own relatives and sometimes maintain indirect contact with their husbands through their children who visit back and forth. This category of separation is applicable only where the husband is living near his wife. If a man is in Southern Rhodesia and does not write, we cannot say whether or not he is, in this sense, separated from his wife. His

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

People regret that
a faithful woman whose husband stays away many years does not bear children, but they do not condone infidelity. The prolonged absence of men which leads to this unsatisfactory situation is seen as part of the disruption of the old order by the coming of the Whites. It is they who are responsible, both for the lack of children in marriages where the woman is faithful and for the occurrence of adultery in marriages where she is not. The virtue of bearing children and the virtue of fidelity are values in conflict and the Ngoni see only one solution, the ending of labour migration. This conflict appears with particular force when a man goes away leaving his wife pregnant. This action is in itself hazardous, for the man will not be there at the time of birth to confess his adultery, yet men do go away knowing their wives are pregnant. If a live child is born, it must be protected by the rite of 'taking up the child'.[19] If this is neglected the child may die, and it is in the interests therefore of the man's relatives as well as the woman's that it should be performed. The only consistent line of action is to ensure that the medicines which can be used as a substitute for the rite are available to the woman. These medicines are expensive, and relatives may be reluctant to find the money for them, particularly as the whole procedure is under the ban of the missions. The only other solution is for the woman to take a lover with whom she performs the rite. If they are caught, the excuse that they were sleeping together merely for 'taking up the child' is not accepted. Here the same conflict and the same attitude are seen as when a woman has an impotent husband.[20] To achieve a desirable end the woman must commit adultery; but woe betide her if she is caught in the act.

There is an important difference between the way in which the kinsfolk act at the level of village discussion and their behaviour later when matters are referred to the court. In the village they are fairly free to act without reference to the absent husband. They can give advice and can attempt to enforce mutually agreed damage payments of chicken, acting in the light of their opinion of what is in their own interest and in the general interest of their kinsman. They cannot deal in this way with divorce or with large damages for adultery. These matters must be referred to the court and here much more deliberate attention is paid to the wishes of the absent man. If a case of adultery is brought by the man's kin, the court enquires about the wishes of the husband in the matter. The husband's kin must produce a letter from him authorizing them to proceed against his wife and he must say in the letter whether he wishes to divorce her or merely to claim damages for adultery. The case is usually adjourned for three to six months while this is done. A woman who pleads for divorce on the ground of her husband's desertion is similarly told to write to him informing him

[19] See above, pp. 45f.
[20] See above, p. 34.

602 593 684 692 that she intends to seek divorce if he does not reply. If the address of the migrant labourer is unknown to his relatives or to his wife, the court endeavours to trace him through the Administration. Thus the husband's kin usually try to prove in court that the woman is seeking divorce because she has another husband in view, and sometimes imply that she has been committing adultery with him. I heard one man oppose the plea for divorce presented by the wife of an absent kinsman by saying that he was sure the woman had been committing adultery but that he had been unable to catch her in the act. Let the court postpone the case until he had good evidence and then he would agree to the plea. The husband's relatives are more certain of £3 damages if they can prove adultery, and the money is paid to them on behalf of the absent man. For her part the woman usually denies that she has any thought of remarriage. She arrives in court in her oldest and shabbiest clothes, to demonstrate both her husband's failure to clothe her and her own lack of desire to attract other men.

593 684 The general principle that no court action involving the husband's sexual rights can be taken without his consent applies even to cases of incest. It may be well known that a woman is living incestuously with, say, her father, but the husband's relatives cannot take her to court without the permission of the husband. Many husbands, on hearing from their relatives that their wives are committing adultery or are pregnant by other men, prefer to let the matter stand over until their return to the village which may be several years hence. Thus one woman may have been sleeping with her father for many years, and another have a growing brood of adulterine children, before at last they are brought to court by their returned husbands.

578 602 Even when a man and his wife are both living in the towns, their relatives may be called upon to settle differences between them. In one instance that came to my notice, a man and his wife both from the same village were living together in Lusaka. The woman had a still-birth and her husband went to a diviner to discover who was responsible for this. He was told by the diviner that his wife had been bewitched by his father's brother's son, who was also in Lusaka. The man wrote home to the village to complain. A meeting was held attended by important people in the village, and it was decided to write back and tell the two men that they must not be so foolish as to quarrel in this way. Not all men who go away remain in such close touch with the village but there is a great deal of correspondence back and forth, and this is augmented by the news brought by friends who come home. The intervention in a marital quarrel in the towns is one aspect of the way in which the field of social relations held in common by rural villagers stretches out to include kinsmen and former neighbours working many hundreds of miles away. Men who fall sick in Southern Rhodesia are fetched and escorted home, fathers go on holiday to visit their

[845] [787] [754] 167 602

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

602 parents have different fields of interest, but the two fields overlap in the well-being of the married couple. At first there is much formality between them, and intermediaries are used whenever possible. Later they become more friendly. In the setting of the village meeting some parents appear to see themselves as allied in wisdom with the opposite parents against the foolishness of the younger generation whose immature behaviour has been the cause of the meeting. At other times, they may act to defend the rights and happiness of their child against the claims of the rival kin group. We have seen in the story of Daniel and Deborah [21] how yet another alignment can occur when both sets of parents support one spouse against the other. There is no simple way in which these different alignments can be predicted, for they are in fact the outcome of
829 the continually changing pattern of social relationships within the local community. In general, all people wish to preserve the existing configuration of relationships, to support the interests of their children and to maintain the values of their society. In any particular
571 situation, these goals may be mutually incompatible, and there is no over-riding principle, such as agnatic descent or a state-enforced code of law, to which all decisions can be referred. The tenuousness of the cohesion of the local group of kin is reflected in the varying alignments of parents in marital quarrels.

578 We tend to think of quarrels as socially disruptive, and in so far as
571 they are not resolved they do lead to the break-up of existing groupings and the formation of new ones. Yet from another point of view, quarrelling is as much a cohesive process as is common participation in marriage ceremonial. Indeed, just as we have seen already [22] that a ceremony of marriage may be a vehicle for expressing hostility between kin groups as well as recognition of common interest, so a quarrel may lead to increased solidarity between kin groups as well as express hostility between spouses. By taking steps to resolve a quarrel, one kin group is brought into face-to-face contact with the other; there is visiting between their villages and mutual hospitality in somewhat the same way as in marriage ceremonial. The two groups may join to censure the erring spouse. The censured person may feel deserted by his (or her) parents but his father and his father-in-law may have come closer together.

602 The formality that characterizes relations between parents at the beginning of a marriage gradually disappears. A man or woman can always seek shelter and hospitality at the hut of a *child's parent-in-law* and in the final ceremony of marriage, when the married couple enter the wife's mother's hut, the two pairs of parents sit together and discuss the merits and limitations of their respective
835 offspring. It is regarded as incestuous for a man to marry a woman whom he calls *child's parent-in-law*. By so doing his son's wife

[21] See above, p. 82.
[22] See above, pp. 76f.

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

becomes her husband's *sibling* so that their marriage is then incestuous. I have recorded elsewhere[33] an instance in which a man married his son's wife's mother. His son's wife left her husband, saying that she could not sleep with her *sibling*. In court the old man was ordered to give up his new wife and on that understanding his son's wife returned to her husband. Yet when I left the area two years later the man and his son were both living with their wives, despite the order of the court.

It is quarrelling, adultery and divorce that bring together the two groups of kin to deliberate. Quarrelling is usually between man and wife and arises from their personal life together. There are very few quarrels between the two groups of kin over the custody of the children or about the handing over or return of marriage payments. The custody of children is determined in theory by the payment of bridewealth. In practice a child stays with its mother until it is weaned and may then be sent to a grandparent. Here there is no argument, even in theory, that all the children should go to one grandparent or the other depending on bridewealth. Some people say that the proper thing to do is to send the first child to the man's mother, the second to his wife's mother, the third to the man's mother, the fourth to his wife's mother, and so on. This is not carried out in practice, and a child goes to live with whichever grandparent asks for it or is conveniently situated. Some old widows run households containing up to half a dozen grandchildren, real and classificatory, and others live alone or with one grandchild although there are many grandchildren available. A married man is concerned that he should not appear to favour his own relatives at the expense of his affines, and he endeavours to see that his children go to live where they will be welcomed and well looked after. As with children, so it is with presents. If he returns from work and gives his father a shirt, it will be prudent the next time to give a shirt to his wife's father. It is only when the marriage has broken up that the two sets of relatives may see themselves opposed against each other, each insistent on its own rights. Even then, there is little point in quarrelling about children. A child soon becomes 'wise enough' and can choose for itself. I recorded an exceptional instance in which a man aged about twenty moved from the village of his father's father, where he had been living, to his mother's father's village on the instructions of his kinsmen, who said that as his father had not paid bridewealth for his mother, he must follow his mother's kin and not his father's. This kind of move does not often occur, and although only one marriage in twenty is accompanied by the payment of bridewealth, many people settle in their fathers' villages.

8. Other Kinsfolk

We have so far discussed the role of kin in a marriage in terms of

[33] See Barnes, op. cit. p. 232

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

11. Headmen

The kin of the couple are not the only people in the village who are concerned in their marriage. In any matter of importance taking place in the village, attracting many onlookers and participants, there should always be someone to represent the 'owner' of the village, as the headman is also called. This is as true of marriage as of anything else. The intervention of the headman is clearly seen in such situations as the gall bladder ceremony and the entry into the wife's mother's hut. At these public affairs a lieutenant may be acting as master of ceremonies, even though he is not directly related to the couple. In most villages everyone is related in some way or other to everyone else in the village, but unless the marriage involves one of the close kin of the headman or his lieutenant, it is clear from the role he plays that he is present not because of his kinship to the couple but because he is a political official in the village. Thus at a gall bladder ceremony a lieutenant was called in to anoint the bride although he came from another division of the village. At another, a village lieutenant instructed the bride with these words: 'I am the lieutenant of the village. Fear me and I will also fear you. Work hard for [your father-in-law] Jesse.'

The headman of the village ought to be called to, or at least told about, any meeting to discuss a quarrel, and if the matter is taken to the court, he may be required to explain what steps he took to settle the quarrel in the village. His opinion on the character of the married couple is listened to. In the case of Daniel and Deborah, we have seen that at the first two meetings the headmen of the two villages were present, and although the headman of Daniel's village was not very closely related to him (he was Daniel's father's wife's father's wife's son) he took part in the discussion. At the third meeting the headman of Deborah's village was not called, but it is significant that the headman's father's father's brother's son was called in. The village was in danger of splitting at about that time, for a variety of reasons, and the headman's classificatory father was trying to form a separate village.

12. The Court

Beyond the ambit of the village lie the courts and the Administration. We have seen that it is to the court that married couples go when their troubles are greater than their kinsfolk can deal with. Beyond the courts there is always the possibility of appeal to the Administration, and from time to time the Administration intervenes in village affairs on its own initiative. Another external system impinging on marital affairs is that focussed on the missions. By contrast, the interests of White planters and urban employers are concentrated in fields other than marriage, and except in the case of employees of long standing, they do not concern themselves with the marital affairs of their labourers, save in so far as attention to these may conflict with a man's attendance at work. In the particular

6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

right, the animal is the property of him who first [drew blood].

II. Should it be a buck about which there is a dispute, one saying, "My dog was first," another, "My dog was first," then they say, "Come, let us dig up medicine." And they take the medicine, one his lot, the other his, and chew a bit between the teeth, and one blows it out over his dog, saying, "You dog, if it were not you (who caught the buck), you must die; if it were you, you must vomit." And the other man says the same (to his dog), and they see the dog of one of them is dying. Should it chance that two men throw together, and one says, "It was I who began," they say, "Do not let us be always arguing about this; come, let us go to the medicine man." They do not drink (the poison) themselves, but their dogs drink. And when they have finished hunting they say, "Let us be getting back now." All the game they have killed they pile up together, and the master of the hunt begins to "twist off" the legs that are his share. If they see that there is a great quantity of meat, they cut it in strips, and make a drying rack and light a fire (under it), that the meat may dry. When dry, it is taken off the rack and tied into bundles.

III. One way of hunting is with many men and dogs, and another of the single hunter. Others, again, dig game pits, and make long fences leading up to them, leaving gaps here and there where the pits are. Another way of hunting is by cutting off a stretch of bush. A man separates his bit of jungle, [by clearing a bare strip all round it] and when all the bush is burned, it alone remains. The game run away from the bare place and enter the bush patch; when the rains are just about to begin to fall, he goes and sets fire to the cut off bush patch. When the game run for the open, people kill them.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

423 widows continue to cultivate the gardens they had before his death. When a man opens up a new garden he may hand over his nearly exhausted old garden to some relative who does not wish to go to the labour of clearing new ground himself. Rights in land cannot be sold, but only given away, and no presents are given to the donor by the recipient of a garden or garden site. They can only be sustained by continued residence in the locality, either by the owner of the rights himself or by his relatives. There are very few court cases concerned with rights in land, and in the courts the only attempt I saw in which a man tried to enforce what he thought to be his rights was met by the statement from the bench that no one had any rights in land, for did not all land belong to the chief?

241 Maize is planted at the beginning of the rains, and the garden is usually weeded twice over before the maize has grown high enough to surmount the weeds. When the rains end, the stalks are felled and put into large stooks to dry. The cobs are then taken off the stalks and carried back to the village to be stored. Finger millet is grown in ash-fertilized patches scattered through the main garden, and in between the maize ground-nuts, pumpkins, and other crops are grown. Sorghum, bulrush millet, and rice are also grown. Most of the work in the garden is carried on in the rainy season, and after the harvest the garden is more or less deserted until the next season, although a certain amount of new land may be cleared as a garden extension.

Dwellings outside the Village

361 There are two types of settlement outside the recognized villages that require mention. These are permanently occupied settlements consisting of two or three huts which I shall refer to as hamlets and [578] temporarily occupied huts in the gardens. The hamlets usually arise as a result of quarrels within a village that are resolved by the breaking away of one of the parties to the quarrel. The activities of the Agricul- [648] tural Department have also led to the formation of hamlets of similar size, both of hamlets of persons accepting agricultural control whose co-villagers have all moved off, and the other way about. These hamlets are all attached to proper villages for registration purposes, and participate in many of the collective activities of the villages near by.

221 The damage done to crops in the latter part of the rainy season 361 necessitates the keeping of a continuous watch, particularly at gar- [241] dens that are on the edge of a cultivated area, in order to drive off the monkeys by day and the wild pigs by night. Shelters are erected on

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

583 [671] been made. It is the legalization payment that is recorded on the marriage registration certificate when one is issued.

Often this payment is postponed until some years after marriage and sometimes it is never made at all. It is generally £1. 10*s.*, and is normally provided by the bridegroom himself out of his savings, although in the old days a man would have been helped by his father. The money goes to the bride's father, and there is no legal obligation on him to share the money with his relatives, although he may do so. Marriage ties can be reinforced by a whole series of ceremonies and ceremonial exchanges and payments between the man's people and the woman's people, and a marriage in which all these ceremonies have been performed is regarded as being 'well fixed'. In such a marriage the parents and siblings of the couple have come to know each other, have collaborated in ritual activities, and have probably had occasion to deliberate together as a court of conciliation in settling quarrels between the couple. This line of development is seldom taken in a marriage in which the legalization payment has not been made. If the husband refuses to pay, then the wife's people will not brew beer for him and his parents, and will not use their influence with his wife to maintain the marriage. We may say that in a well-fixed marriage the two families are linked together, and that in one that is not well fixed it is only the two individuals who are linked. Indeed when no payments have been made it is common for the bride's relatives to profess ignorance of the name of the husband, or at least of his parents' names. No action can be taken in the court to enforce marriage payments, although in an adultery or divorce case the court may order the legalization payment to be made.

585 476 578 The ceremonies of marriage should not be thought of merely as occasions for harmonious co-operation. They may also become the vehicle for the expression of aggression between the two families involved. This is particularly true of the obligation on the man to bring a party of his friends to hoe in the garden of his father-in-law. The hoeing party may do more harm than good to the crops if the present offered them by the father-in-law is considered inadequate.

583 178 [231] Prior to the conquest of the tribe the principal marriage payment was bride-wealth,[1] consisting of so many head of cattle. In those days, according to informants, no legalization payment was made. Nowadays bride-wealth is paid only in a small proportion of marriages, and rarely until after several children have been born. In the old days

[1] *Malobolo*. Cf. the Zulu verb *uku-lobola* and noun *ilobolo*.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Grandparents

603 Children on weaning are often sent to their grandmothers to be brought up. The payments made in the marriage do not seem to influence either the choice of grandmother or whether or not the child stays with its parents. A child is sometimes sent to an old woman not its grandmother but related in some other way who lives in the same or a nearby village and who already has a brood of children to look after. This separation from the parents may occur whether the grandmother lives in the same or in a different village from the parents. Grandparents, and in particular that grandmother by whom a child was brought up, become confidants in later life. It is to her husband's grandparents that a wife complains if her husband does not fulfil his sexual obligations, while it is through the bride's grandparents that the groom should approach her parents when arranging the marriage.
[606] The husband must avoid his wife's mother, but his wife's mother's mother and his wife's father's mother can sit on the same side of the house as he does, as though they were themselves married to him. When he is drunk a man can fondle the breasts of his grandmother, whereas to attempt to do this to his mother would be regarded as shocking.

593 While it is the grandmothers who intervene in the beginning of a matrimonial quarrel when the dispute is still an affair of the village, it
691 is the parents of the couple, or if the parents are dead or senile the
578 brothers, who will go to court to support them when the dispute has moved to the judicial zone of activity. Women seeking divorce on
[586] grounds of desertion get their fathers to speak in their favour, while the absentee husband, who may be lost in Southern Rhodesia, will be represented by his father or his brother. Occasionally a father may give his support to his daughter-in-law rather than to his son if the son has annoyed his father as well as his wife.

593 Outsiders cannot intervene in the disputes within a family, although they may be called in to give their support to one side or the other.
571 In particular the family of a man will not themselves take the initiative
578 in bringing an action against his wife, however strongly they may rally to his support in a dispute where the initiative is taken by the wife's people. This principle applies even in cases of incest. For example, a
[684] woman whose husband was away in Southern Rhodesia slept with her father. The husband's brothers wrote to Southern Rhodesia to tell him what was happening, but as in his reply he did not instruct them to take proceedings in the matter, nothing more was done about it.

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Council mentioned above spent some tweny years of his life in Johannesburg. Fort Jameson itself is not a sufficiently big town for this process to take place within it, and yet it is only in Fort Jameson or on the tobacco farms that a man can live with a leg in both camps, going home to the village at the week-ends and probably keeping his wife in the village during the wet season to tend her crop.

On the other hand, there is some rivalry between the traditional leaders and the comparatively prosperous townspeople. The well-clad and well-housed Ngoni of the township are sometimes described scornfully by village people as 'merely White'. There is a feeling that the leading African traders are trying to monopolize the economic opportunities in the villages. Recently the same prominent Ngoni businessman proposed that he should take over the delivery of mail to the Native Authorities, which he claimed he would be able to do more efficiently with a car than can the present postman on a bicycle. The Paramount Chief did not answer this proposal but wrote instead to the Administration to complain against the danger of one man being allowed to earn so much more than anyone else while there were so many people who needed money. At the same time, men whose lives are led principally in the towns complain that in the villages there is 'nothing but jungle', and that the chiefs are old-fashioned and obstructive.

The Administration

The relationship between the Provincial Administration and the Ngoni is characteristically one of superordination and subordination. The District Officer can send for any Ngoni, but not even the Paramount Chief can send for the District Officer. This characteristic arises from two sources, from the premiss which we find held all over Southern Africa, that any White is superior to any Black, and from the supervisory role allotted to the Administration in the Native Authority scheme. These two facets of the same relationship are not always seen separately by the Ngoni, and in many contexts their behaviour towards the Administration is governed entirely by the fact that the District Officer and those above him are all White. Official reports by the Administration during the reign of Mpezeni II repeatedly remarked on the Paramount Chief's distrust of Whites, and this attitude still persists. Any kind of trouble at all, particularly when it is seen as a characteristic of the present times as opposed to the glorious trouble-free past of the days of peace, before the Whites

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

249 464 [857] [462] near their farms, who go home every afternoon after work and come back the next morning. Others employ women and children, and most boys work intermittently on the farms to earn enough to keep themselves in clothes until they are old enough to go away to Southern Rhodesia. Other boys work in their holidays from school.

466 To some extent people from the same village tend to go to work together in groups on a farm. This is particularly true in the case of the short-term labourers who sleep at home, since the choice of farm is restricted to those in the immediate vicinity of the village. Here sometimes the majority of the inhabitants of a village will turn out under the leadership of the headman of the village and work for three or four days on the same farm. Longer-term labourers may be attracted to a farm by the presence of a foreman from their own village.

584 Girls also go to work on their own, and many marriages are made as a result of encounters on the farms. Marriages made in this way are not always recognized by the parents of the girl until the man has brought her back to her village and formally approached her parents.

444 The villages near the farms, and to a lesser extent those near the township, sell beer to the labourers, while the farms themselves buy up most of the maize and other cereals that villagers have to sell.

464 651 653 [622] The continual demand for labour on the farms leads to their serving as a sanctuary for fugitives from social pressure of one kind or another. For example, a native policeman was going round the villages obtaining labour for the Administration for essential public works. He adopted the normal practice of imposing a quota of labourers to be supplied upon each village and made the headman responsible for seeing that his village quota was met. If the headman did not do this, he enlisted the headman as a labourer. At one village the headman told the policeman that his people had all run away to the gardens when they had heard of the arrival of the policeman in the area. The policeman warned the headman that either he must exercise his authority over his people and order them back into the village so that he could enlist them, or else the headman would be enlisted. He came back the next day to see what had happened, and found that the headman had gone off to work on a farm. There is machinery for recovering such people, but it does not work easily or quickly, and by the time a man has been located and brought back, the reason for which he was wanted may have fallen away.

691 578 Disputes between Africans on farms can be dealt with at the nearest Native Court, but if the farmer wishes to enforce his rights under the

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

Labour Ordinances, he can only do so through the District Commissioner's court at Fort Jameson, which may take up more of his time than he thinks the matter worth. In consequence, few actions are brought by farmers against their African labourers and if a man breaks his contract and deserts, no action may be taken against him.

It is not surprising that the efficiency of labour operating under these conditions is low, and that the wages are also low. These two conditions react on one another, and it is misleading to regard the low wages as the only cause of the inefficiency, or the inefficiency as the only cause of the low wages. The practical effect is that men who wish to earn more money than they can get as labourers on the farms at 14*s.* a month with food go away to Southern Rhodesia. It must be observed, however, that men started going to Southern Rhodesia long before the tobacco farms were opened up to their present extent.

Labour Migration

Prior to the European conquest, the only men who had worked for Whites were those employed as carriers by the handful of travellers who passed through the country before 1896, and as carriers and labourers by the North Charterland Exploration Company from 1896 onwards. But immediately after the end of the fighting in 1898, recruiting started among the Ngoni for police work in Southern Rhodesia, and there has been a continual flow of labour migrants south ever since.

There have been considerable fluctuations in the number of men going south since that time, particularly during the two world wars, when the military requirements of the Territory exercised a greater claim. The latest figures for the Eastern Province as a whole show that, in 1946, 23 per cent. of the taxable males registered in the province were absent from the province. Another 17½ per cent. were at work within the province.[1] In May 1947, in two Ngoni counties with a combined total of 1,739 registered taxable males, it was found that 30 per cent. of them were at work in the Eastern Province and a further 42 per cent. were away elsewhere, a total of 72 per cent. away from their villages. Half of those living outside the Eastern Province were classified as 'lost', in that their present whereabouts were unknown to the people at home.[2] These figures exclude all men who have been 'lost' for more than five years.

[1] Labour Department, *Annual Report, 1946*, p. 12.

[2] These figures were given me by the District Commissioner, Fort Jameson.

Ill: Lancaster G-5 (ca. 1935) 1937 FR5 Ngoni FR5

159 In 1828 Zongendaba, who had met with Mzilikazi near the border of Portuguese
167 East Africa, fought him over a petty disagreement, which it is alleged was a dog fight.
173 Mzilikazi beat Zongendaba, who moved on into Portuguese East Africa between the
Limpopo and the Sabi Rivers and united himself with Manukusa; this was the year of
578 Tshaka's assassination. In 1831 we find Manukusa and Zongendaba midway between
643 the Limpopo and Zambesi Rivers.
648 In the year 1833, in which Manukusa attacked the Portuguese and drove them
out of Espirito Santo (Lourenco Marques), Manukusa and Zongendaba disagreed and
a fight took place, after which Zongendaba and his following, accompanied by
Mhlabawadabuka, a brother of Manukusa, continued the migration north.

In the following year, 1834, on the border of what is now S. Rhodesia, Zongendaba
broke with Mhlabawadabuka and proceeded in a north-westerly direction, where at the
Ingwe-Kwini River he met the Ba-Lozi or Ba-Nyai, whom he destroyed; their chief,
Mambo, was killed, some thirty miles from the battlefield at Intaba-Zi-Ka-Mambo.
[805] In November of the year 1835, at the time of an eclipse, a passage was found across the
Ukwembe River (Zambesi) at Manyerere on the south bank, nearly opposite Zumbo on
the north bank in Portuguese East Africa. At the crossing a dispute arose between
Zongendaba and an induna, Ngabi Maseko, who with a small following remained on the
south bank and, it is stated, crossed over the following year near Tete.

Zongendaba, after crossing, halted for a period whilst his impis looted the surrounding
country; his camp was built at Mkoko. About 1839 a movement in an easterly direction
was made, it is said, by Gwaze Tole, who was a brother-in-law to Zongendaba and his
[645] Chief Councillor, because, acting on Zongendaba's instructions, he had put to death one
[684] of Zongendaba's wives for infidelity; Zongendaba followed. The direction was changed,
after passing to the west of the present Fort Jameson, to a more northerly one passing
the head-waters of the Bua River en route.

In 1840 at Chulu, Mbelwa or Mombera was born, son of Zongendaba by his wife
Umnene. Thence on to the Rukuru Valley.

In 1842 Zongendaba arrived in the Fipa country, and the next two years were spent
in raiding the surrounding country of the Sukuma and Masfwa.

In 1845 Zongendaba died. It is stated that he had never seen or been seen by a
159 European, that he was fierce with his soldiers and his wives who, on the least excuse, he put
173 to death, that he was very kind and considerate to his captives, and that he listened to
643 two men only, Gwaza Tole and Njekwane. He died at Mapupu in the Fipa country
[766] and was buried in a black ox skin near the Nyinaluzi River. On his death bed he gave
[428] his assegai to his eldest son and heir (by his Great Wife, Sosera), Ntutu Mpezeni, who was
then in his twentieth year.

(2) Loziwawa Nqumayo was the wife of Zongendaba—"The Great Wife, Inkosikazi".
159 She was born before the accession of Tshaka, about the year 1800, in the tribal area near
173 St. Lucia Bay. She was Zongendaba's "great chosen wife" and died during the great
562

11: Lancaster G-5 (ca. 1935) 1937 FR5 Ngoni FR5

159 173 [567] Zimakazi Lavu Ngoma of the Ansenga tribe worked for Sosera when he was a youth. Zimakazi was caught and made a slave in 1835, the year of the crossing. Ngungu Ngoma, his son, has often heard this from his father and the chieftainess, Sosera. Zimakazi died a few years before his mistress. His son, Ngungu Ngoma, is in the N. Rhodesia Government Service and is about fifty years of age.

[562] [593] (3) Chibenya Mkhalapi. This was the first wife of importance of Zongendaba, the iNkhlus wife. When Zongendaba's mother, Mquamacho Nzima, died, Chibenya was taken out of the chief's house and put in his mother's place and called "the Great Mother." This is a well-known custom amongst the Ngoni. The date of her death and place of burial are not known by the present day chiefs. It is stated by some of the indunas that she accompanied Zongendaba north and crossed the Zambesi in 1835, by others that she was the mother of Mtwalu, but this appears doubtful.

[645] [701] (4) Gwaza Tole. Brother-in-law of Zongendaba; Chief Councillor and one of the great indunas. Tribe, Ngoni; regiment, Machaya Imiti. Father, Nzyekezera (Njekerezera); mother and wife, not known; sons, Masakambewa and Chitete.

[554] Zongendaba had married one of Gwaza's sisters. He appears to have been an elderly and very wise councillor, in whom the chief placed great trust and whose advice the indunas and captains readily accepted. Gwaza killed one of Zongendaba's wives on his instructions, possibly his own sister. This led to ill feeling, and it is stated that Gwaza and certain others of his following kept apart from the chief after this affair. He died at Fipa and was buried there in 1846.

159 173 (5) Zulu Gama. Father, Njeru; mother, not known; wife, Nzyalisa.

Zongendaba married a sister of Zulu Gama (possibly Mambose Gama) before the Zambesi crossing. They had no issue.

167 On the upward trek after crossing the Zambesi River to the Fipa country, Zulu Gama left his wife, Nzyalisa, at a village near Kasitu; she had a son by him named Paulos Gama, to whom Zulu Gama left villages at Luanjazi near Mzimba.

[578] After Zongendaba's death, Zulu Gama and a following broke away, and were followed by the adherents of Mombera. A fight took place near what is now Old Langenburg, and Mombera's people were scattered by this wily old induna. He crossed the Shire River in 1868. He entered Songea and died there later. Chief Ngabi Maseko was killed by [554] Zulu Gama. Zulu Gama appears to have been a general of high qualities and a sound councillor.

159 173 [701] [645] (6) Njekwano Ntilila. Father, Mphange, a brother of Hlatshwayo; mother, Manyuwazana; wife, Mtonga Jojo; sons: Kapatamoyo I., Sondwani, Hoye Chafumela, Chulu, Mene, Mazwe. A cousin of Chief Zongendaba. Chief Induna of the Zimpofu regiment and Chief Induna of the Council. Died at Mpinduka Hill, Matambazi River, in the year 1868.

(7) Mgai Kumalo. Father, Hlatshwayo; mother, unknown; wife, Bichi Nkhosi. Regiment, Majekwana. Died in the Ufipa Country 1849.